

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)



THE USDA'S LOAN AND GRANT PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE TO RURAL AREAS AND TOWNS WITH POPULATIONS OF 10,000 OR LESS, AND INCLUDE WATER, SEWER, ELECTRIFICATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMS.



RURAL DEVELOPMENT VISION STATEMENT

Partners in helping the people of rural America develop sustainable communities.

FOR PROJECTS IN THE CALIFORNIA
BORDER REGION, CONTACT:

Mr. Jeffrey A. Hays
Rural Development Director

82901 Bliss Ave.
Indio, CA 92201
Phone: (760) 342-4624
Fax: (760) 347-4074
E-mail: jhays@rdmail.rural.usda.gov

RURAL DEVELOPMENT MISSION STATEMENT

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RURAL AMERICANS

USDA has the unique responsibility of coordinating Federal assistance to rural areas of the Nation. The Rural Development mission is to help rural Americans to improve the quality of their lives.

To do this, USDA is working in closely with the private and nonprofit sectors and with state, tribal and local governments to fundamentally change the way government works. With this new philosophy of public partnership...this new relationship among Government, industry, and communities...many positive outcomes for rural Americans are happening daily.

Now and in the future, prosperity in rural America depends on ensuring that residents have a wide range of economic opportunities. Rural America's historic strengths — agriculture and forestry — will continue as one part of the picture.

USDA works to make sure that rural citizens can participate fully in the global economy — with technical assistance and programs that help rural Americans build strong economies to improve their quality of life.

USDA also helps rural communities meet their basic needs by:

- Building **water** and **wastewater** systems,
- Financing decent, affordable housing,
- Supporting **electric** power and **rural businesses**, including **cooperatives**, and
- Supporting **community development** with information and technical assistance.

A new and sharper focus on rural development took shape with passage of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994. Rural development work is focused in three new organizations reporting to the Under Secretary for Rural Development.

- The Rural Utilities Service offers telephone and electric programs along with water and sewer programs.
- The Rural Housing Service includes rural housing programs as well as rural community loan programs.
- The Rural Business-Cooperative Service includes cooperative development and technical assistance, plus other business development programs, and the Alternative Agricultural Research and Commercialization Center.

RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE MISSION STATEMENT

The Rural Utilities Service's mission is to serve a leading role in improving the quality of life in rural America by administering its electrification, telecommunications, and water and waste programs in a service-oriented, forward-looking, and financially responsible manner.

The Rural Utilities Service's Water and Waste Loan and Grant Programs provide for investment of funds in the most needy communities for critically needed water and waste facilities. Loan and grants are available to rural areas and towns with populations of 10,000 or less for the construction, replacement, expansion or other improvements of such facilities.

RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE (RUS) WATER AND WASTE DISPOSAL PROGRAMS

United States
Department of
Agriculture Rural
Development Rural
Utilities
Service

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) administers a water and wastewater loan and grant program to improve the quality of life and promote economic development in rural America. RUS is a new Agency created in October 1994 by the reorganization of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The program was previously administered by the Rural Development Administration and the Farmers Home Administration, which were abolished by the reorganization. At the State and local levels, the program is administered by field offices of Rural Development. RUS is coordinating the Water 2000 initiative, which has as its goal to provide clean, safe, and affordable drinking water to all rural homes by the year 2000.

WATER AND WASTE DISPOSAL DIRECT AND GUARANTEED LOANS

Purpose. Direct loans may be made to develop water and wastewater systems, including solid waste disposal and storm drainage, in rural areas and to cities and towns with a population of 10,000 or less. Funds are available to public entities, such as municipalities, counties, special-purpose districts, and Indian tribes. In addition, funds may be made available to corporations operated on a not-for-profit basis. Priority will be given to public entities, in areas with less than 5,500 people, to restore a deteriorating water supply, or to improve, enlarge, or modify a water facility or an inadequate waste facility. Also, preference will be given to requests which involve the merging of small facilities and those serving low-income communities. Applicants must be unable to obtain funds from other sources at reasonable rates and terms. The maximum term for all loans is 40 years; however, no repayment period will exceed State statutes or the useful life of the facility. Interest rates may be obtained from Rural Development field offices.

Guaranteed loans may be made for the same purpose as direct loans. They are made and serviced by lenders such as banks and savings and loan associations. Normally, guarantees will not exceed 80 percent on any loss of interest and principal on the loan.

WATER AND WASTE DISPOSAL GRANTS

Purpose. Reduce water and waste disposal costs to a reasonable level for users of the system. Grants may be made, in some instances, up to 75 percent of eligible project costs. Eligible applicants are the same as for loans.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING GRANTS

Purpose. Make grants to nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance and/or training to associations located in rural areas and to cities and towns with a population of 10,000 or less. Assistance may be provided to identify and evaluate solutions to water and waste disposal problems, to improve the operation and maintenance of existing water and waste disposal facilities, and to assist associations in preparing applications for water and waste disposal facilities.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT GRANTS

Purpose. Make grants to public and private nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance and/or training to associations located in rural areas and to cities and towns with a population of 10,000 or less to reduce or eliminate pollution of water resources, and improve planning and management of solid waste facilities. Assistance may be provided to enhance operator skills in operations and maintenance, identify threats to water resources, and reduce the solid water stream.

RURAL WATER CIRCUIT RIDER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Purpose. Provide on-site technical assistance to help assure cost effective operation of rural water systems. RUS has assisted rural water systems, via contracting, with day-to-day operational, financial and management problems. The assistance is provided at no charge and may be requested by officials of rural water systems or by Rural Development personnel. It complements supervisory assistance provided by Rural Development personnel.

APPLICATIONS

Information about the water and waste disposal programs and advice on how to assemble information to determine engineering feasibility, economic soundness, cost estimates, organization, financing and management matters, may be obtained from Rural Development field offices. These offices are usually listed in local telephone directories under the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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